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ACTION DS-01

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	AID-00	INR-10	SS-00	EB-00	NSCE-00
	ARA-00	NSAE-00	COME-00	SSO-00	L-03	TRSE-00	PM-10
	PA-02	FAAE-00	CCO-00	INRE-00	CA-02	USSS-00	USIE-00
	JUSE-00	FBIE-00	OC-02	DOEE-00	M-01	NRC-02	FAIM-01
	DSE-00	SCT-02	P-02	T-01	/039 W		

-----312672 270617Z /21

R 252345Z MAY 88
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6745
INFO CIA WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY CARACAS

UNCLAS BOGOTA 08044

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: PINS, PTER, CO
SUBJECT: ELN VIOLENCE UPDATE

REF: BOGOTA 7250

1. (U) SUMMARY: CARRYING OUT THE THREATS ISSUED AFTER THE RELEASE OF MOSTLY FOREIGN HOSTAGES (REFTEL), THE SELF STYLED ARMY OF NATIONAL LIBERATION (ELN) HAS CONTINUED ITS ATTACKS. SINCE MAY 11 THE GUERRILLAS HAVE BOMBED THE CANO LIMON-COVENAS OIL PIPELINE TWO MORE TIMES, BRINGING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ATTACKS TO 27 THIS YEAR. MOREOVER, THE GROUP HAS STAGED ATTACKS ON A NATURAL GAS PIPELINE NEAR BUCARAMANGA, SANTANDER DEPARTMENT, AND ON A BRIDGE AND AN ELECTRIC TOWER. GUERRILLAS ALSO HAVE INFILTRATED ONGOING PEASANT MARCHES IN NORTHERN COLOMBIA AND ATTACKED SECURITY FORCES (REPORTED SEPTTEL). END SUMMARY

2. (U) THE ELN BOMBED A GAS PIPELINE, AN ELECTRIC
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TOWER, AND A BRIDGE IN SANTANDER DURING THE EARLY MORNING HOURS OF MAY 24. THE NATURAL GAS PIPELINE, JUST FOUR KILOMETERS FROM BUCARAMANGA, WAS SERIOUSLY DAMAGED. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, THE BLAST

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: OSCAR J OLSON
DATE/CASE ID: 05 JUL 2007 200603798

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DESTROYED APPROXIMATELY 50 METERS OF THE LINE. THIS ATTACK FOLLOWED BOMBINGS OF THE CANO LIMON TO COVENAS OIL PIPELINE ON MAY 11 AND MAY 15. WHILE THE SECOND ATTACK CAUSED MINOR DAMAGE, THE MAY 11 BLAST REPORTEDLY DESTROYED 10 METERS, TEMPORARILY HALTED PUMPING, AND SPARKED A LARGE FIRE.

3. (U) APPARENTLY NOT SATISFIED, THE GUERRILLAS ALSO BOMBED AN ELECTRIC TOWER AND A BRIDGE. ACCORDING TO THE BOGOTA PRESS, THE BRIDGE ON THE MANCO RIVER WAS PARTIALLY BLOWN INTO THE WATER. EARLY ESTIMATES PUT THE DAMAGE AT OVER 10 MILLION PESOS (USD 30,000.00) AND TWO MONTHS REPAIR TIME. THE BRIDGE LINKS BUCARAMANGA WITH ROADS LEADING TO BOGOTA AND THEREFORE IS IMPORTANT TO OVERALL TRAFFIC AND COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE CAPITAL OF SANTANDER DEPARTMENT.

4. (U) ELN GUERRILLAS ALSO INFILTRATED CAMPESINO MARCHES IN NORTHERN COLOMBIA AND STAGED ATTACKS ON SECURITY FORCES, USING THE PROTESTERS AS COVER. TWO SOLDIERS WERE KILLED WHILE BLOCKING THE ROADS FROM BARRANCABERMEJA TO BUCARAMANGA ON MAY 23 (FULL REPORT SEPTTEL).

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